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Fundamentals.

Even the most progressive people need at times to look back before they march forward upon their onward and upward track. It is often helpful to return to first principles. Like a mariner who in his steering has lifted his eye too long from the compass we may have unconsciously deviated from our proper course. The re-consideration of first principles tends both to rectify such deviations and at the same time confirm our faith in their truth and necessity. So, too, in the matter of the fundamentals of faith. In what do they really consist? Were they once for all given to the saints to remain for evermore unquestioned and unchanging? Or, on the other hand, are they not something spiritual rather than formal, something which each living age needs to perceive and appraise and apply for itself? If the latter be correct, as we think our readers will agree, then there is a responsibility which is more in the nature of transmuting truth than in merely transmitting it.

The difference we have hinted at above is really vital. It has been responsible for a conflict in America not yet ended and whose issues are of paramount importance. The name "Fundamentalist" has become the badge of a party, crassly conservative in its theological outlook and greatly antagonistic to anything savouring of Liberal religion. Because Dr. H. E. Fosdick combined Christian earnestness and eloquence with enlightened theology he was anathema. Determined attempts were made to make his great work as a preacher in New York impossible. Fortunately, the attempt failed, but the Fundamentalists are determined and ruthless. They regard as Christian Fundamentals some things which no Liberal theologian could possibly admit. Take, for example, the doctrine of verbal inspiration of the Bible. Inspiration is a mechanical process—everything between Genesis and Revelations is alike inspired. Such a theory robs present-day faith of its meaning, thought of its responsibilities. It becomes not only vain but wicked to ask with Hartley Coleridge:

> "But hath the present age no God to seek?
> Or is God silent in these latter days?

To adopt such a position stultifies thought, devitalises faith, and makes the Christian Gospel a divisive thing. If love to God and love to man are Fundamentals, as all Christians would agree, and if attention be concentrated upon these, then there is hope of unity and of fruitful co-operation in Christian work. But should the so-called Fundamentalist position be prevalent all progress will become impossible and narrowness and bigotry be all-in-all. We, for our part, cannot believe that even in orthodox America, where many mediæval survivals laugh to scorn its claim to lead the world, such a theology will win its way. Having lost in the case of the Fosdick trial we are assured that Fundamentalism is a losing cause, both there and elsewhere. Not even fervid missionary zeal can yield it more than a delusive and dwindling popular favour.

Notes of the Month.

It is not unfitting to regard the month of September as a month of preparation. Under normal conditions it marks the transition between the summer and the autumn. The shortening days seem the natural prelude to winter. The holidays are over and the daily round of duty assumes its normal character. Quite naturally we begin to think and plan for the winter. As regards church and school programmes of usefulness call for consideration in the hope that all good things may be furthered. We cannot stand still, since the belief in progress is one of our most characteristic tenets. Much as we prize our privileges and cherish the precious legacy of freedom the past has taught us, we must press on towards the mark of our high calling in Christ Jesus.

* *

In some such spirit then let us all consider earnestly what we may attempt for the common good. Are we not convinced from much we hear and read that our faith is needed by many thoughtful minds? The difficulties created by an unprogressive theology were never more real that they are to-day. The correspondence in the press suggests that many people have their own problems to solve. Reared in orthodoxy they still wish to share in the living and growing thought of to-day. Science with its story of wonders makes its strong appeal. Must they turn deaf ears to its eloquent plea if they would remain religious? Quite recently Dean Inge has declared that for many persons there still exists a conflict between Religion and Science, Is it not our great opportunity to demonstrate that vital religion, sane and significant, knows of no such cleavage? Long ago the great teachers of our household of faith, men like Channing and Martineau, possessed the secret of combining spiritual verities with the satisfaction of the mind's quest for knowledge. Cannot we, also, who have entered into their labours, make their faith valid for the needs of to-day?

* *

Sympathy will be felt with the members of All Souls' Congregation in having once again to make choice of a minister when the Rev. E. I. Fripp's resignation takes effect at the close of the present month. We sincerely hope that they will not be long left without guidance. They can look back upon a long and useful history, when their ministers and members played an important part in the life of Belfast. Thanks largely to Mr. Fripp's zeal, they have a beautiful church, well equipped for worship. Both for the sake of the church and also for our community in general we trust they may speedily see their way to start another chapter of Christian endeavour under earnest and enthusiastic leadership.

* *

We would remind our readers that soon there will be an election to vacancies in the Bodel-Mackenzie Fund, and that all applicants for benefit should act speedily. Application forms can be obtained from the Secretary, the Rev. Mathew Watkins, at 4 Bathgate Drive, Strandtown, Belfast. Already this worthy organization has been instrumental in giving greatly-needed and much-appreciated help.

* *

We are glad to be able to give elsewhere a picture which represents the recently-opened Newtownards Church. Unfortunately the block arrived too late for insertion last month, when we gave an account of the opening proceedings. But we are convinced that our readers will be glad to see how the new building appears. Since the opening day special preachers have conducted afternoon services on several Sundays, and we hope the good results may be permanent.

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Temperance Notes.

Bands of Hope.

By the time this Magazine is in your hands the season of active Church social life will be with us, or about to commence. We hope no one will have procrastinated and find themselves unprepared. Preparation is necessary for all good work. Some believe they can appear before children at a moment's notice. This may be true on an occasion—but even for "an occasion" one should be prepared! And for children even more careful study is necessary. Children are very exacting and very cute! Also, surely they deserve our very best. Children naturally are bright and interested. Therefore do not spoil your opportunity by being dull and uninteresting. Vary your programme. By this we do not mean give one night solely to Temperance talks and another night to, say, recitations, songs and the like. But vary the Temperance talks. Give them surprises. Personally I have one thought and it forms the atmosphere of every hour with my Band of Hope. It is simply this—the joy of Temperance—the misery of Intemperance. Paint lurid pictures of both. You cannot overstate the terrible evils resulting from drink—neither can you overstate the wonder and joy and beauty of this world of man to which we are rightful heirs if we "do the right."

Children love games. These games need not be confined to the "Social Nights." You may play many fascinating games with the children with blackboard and chalk.

Total Abstinence Tabooed.

There is an insidious move that can, I believe, be traced to the Trade (particularly to the activities of the Anti-Prohibition Party) to contrast "True" Temperance and Total Abstinence. It is clever; it is also cheap. The argument is, briefly put, that it is intemperate to be a strict T.T. Perhaps logically this is sound. But remember this—there are a large number of Total Abstainers who see no inherent wrong in taking a glass now and again. I don't mean see no wrong in taking it themselves necessarily—but in others taking it. But they deliberately abstain. For one reason they believe that they ARE their brother's keeper. And another, they believe the world would be better if alcoholic liquor was abolished from the land. They are not fanatics, but are conscientiously anxious to help to rid the world of so much evil as is evidently connected with the drink.

I said there was an insidious move. That is true. Because it is already having effect. There are already many Temperance people beginning to feel ashamed of having it known that they are total abstainers, especially among the youths. They are beginning to think it is not manly. They are thinking that maybe it shows greater control to be able to take "harmlessly."

But it is all beside the point. We abstain (as we constantly reiterate) because so much of the world's worst crime is traceable to the influence of drink. After all, what is there to be ashamed of in being a true total abstainer?

P.G.

The Business Agent, the Rev. G. F. Slipper, earnestly asks for the early payment of all outstanding accounts for the Magazine. Some of these are now considerably over-due, and it would greatly facilitate the balancing of the accounts if prompt payment were the practice.

Young People's Page.

"HARDENING AND TEMPERING."

"Some of you have read in history about the Spartans, a people among the ancient Greeks; their whole manner of life and education, the way they trained the young, and what they required of their grown men, was directed to *harden*, to produce utter indifference to pain, to train up a race who could endure torture or death without a groan, or the quivering of a muscle. I remember with what wonder, years ago, I used to read the story of the Spartan youth, who stole a fox, and hid it under his cloak; how it began to bite and gnaw his flesh; but still he held it, and the people standing about knew nothing till at last he dropped dead among them, without a word or a cry. You can well understand to what a pitch the *hardening* of that people was carried; when such endurance was what they most sought for and admired. Well, a little later, there was a sect of philosophers, who held very much the same ideas: they were called the "Stoics." Their idea of perfecting man's character, was of obtaining rigid command over every passion, and every feeling; to be able to despise the natural desires of life, and to stand immoveable against the world and fate, able to bear the intensest suffering, or meet the cruelest death, with calm disdain. This seemed to them the highest virtue. And it was a good thing in one way,—it was a wholesome reaction against the softness and effeminacy and self-indulgence of a corrupt and luxurious generation, —but you see, in resisting and despising all that, they went to too great an extreme, to a hardness which was inhuman, unnatural; they were like steel when it is *hardened*. Yet remember, this was about the noblest kind of character, which was ever attained in the old Heathen world. It was a good thing,—a right kind of hardness, but excessive:—what it needed was what hardened steel needs, to become really admirable and useful—that is, *tempering*.

And now, see what came to temper this old Stoical, or Spartan hardness—*Christianity—the Gospel*. When you cross the boundary which marks off the old heathen life from the new life of Christian times, you meet with a new kind of character. It is, as if you went from a country, where they had only got as far as hardening their steel, to one where they had also learnt how to temper it! You meet with just the old strength and fortitude—the stern character, which could meet torture or death without a quivering of fear, but you see it tempered with devotion, gentleness, and love to others. The Stoics wrapped themselves in proud disdain—could meet suffering or death with almost a sneer, but stood aloof from a world which they despised. How different the spirit of the early Christians, who went about doing good; who tried to carry the blessings of their religion to the poor, the sick, and the dying; and who, when condemned to suffer for their faith, met the last enemy, not with the forced calmness of disdain, but with the holy fortitude of trust and prayer! I don't say all were like this—all I say is, this was the higher development of character, which Christianity introduced into the world; the stern old hardness of the Spartan or the Stoic, *not weakened*—the heroic stories of the noble army of martyrs can tell you that—not weakened, but *tempered* with charity, and meekness, and humble looking up to God!

The history of Christianity afterwards has many a story which shows just this same truth, how human nature, to be perfected for use in God's work, must not be hardened only, but tempered also! Have you ever read how for ages, the great Saints of the Church hardened themselves and forgot the tempering, and what manner of metal was produced in consequence? There was Simon Stylites—the Pillar Saint as he was called—a man who was the marvel and admiration of his generation; we read how some 1400 years ago he built himself a pillar 40 cubits high, and there for seven and thirty years, through heat

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MODERN CHURCHMEN AND UNITARIANS

By S. H. MELLONE, M.A., D.Sc.

In January in the present year (1922) the Rev. Henry D. A. Major, Editor of **The Modern Churchman**, contributed to **The Hibbert Journal** an article designed to elucidate the views of Modern Churchmen by discussing the difference between their position and that of the Unitarians. This pamplet is a reprint, with a few omissions and additions, of an article by Dr. Mellone which appeared in the April number of **The Hibbert Journal** and offered some comments on Mr. Major's argument and an explanation of the Unitarian position. The Committee of the British and Foreign Unitarian Association have authorised its publication by the Lindsey Press in the present form **for wide distribution.**

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and cold, through storm and sunshine, he wore his life away in prayer and fasting. Once a week he took a little of the coarsest food; clad in rough sheepskin, never properly lying down (for his pillar was but three feet across) there he abode until his stiffened limbs and worn emaciated frame could serve his turn no more, and he sank down in death. Common men and women counted him a Saint! A piece of wondrous *hardened* humanity he was, but as useless up there on his pillar, as a piece of hardened steel which you might put over your mantle shelf as a curiosity. What he wanted was *tempering!* If you could have brought him down from that pillar, and warmed that cold passionless heart with a little genial Christian love, taught him to look kindly on the busy life around him, instead of despising is as a carnal fleshly thing, why he might not have been so remarkable as a specimen of *hardened steel,* but he would have been far more useful, and his hardness so *tempered* would have done far more good!"

DR. BROOKE HERFORD.

Forgiveness of Sins.

We continue this month the report of the Annual Lecture on the above subject furnished us by the kindness of the lecturer, the Rev. Alfred Hall, M.A., B.D., of Sheffield.

Yet another hindrance or insuperable obstacle according to Jesus, is the possession of an unforgiving spirit towards others. The generous lord who forgave the great debt, binds the prisoner and casts him into prison because of his hardness of heart towards a fellow servant who owed a small sum. The pleas we may use in prayer, the one thing above all others which constitutes a claim on the divine mercy is the mercy we have showed towards others. Forgive us our trespasses, because we have forgiven others their trespasses against us. Further, "Charity covereth a multitude of sins" is a truly Christian sentiment. An affectionate nature wins salvation for itself. So Jesus can say of the woman who was a sinner and who washed his feet with her tears and wiped them with the hairs of her head, "Her sins, which are many are forgiven, for she loved much: but to whom little is forgiven the same loveth little." (Luke, vii. 36.). Jesus mentions at least two grounds on which leniency ought to be shown towards offenders. Some fall because they have had no clear vision of divine truth. Their offences may seem gross, but they had never seen the highest and so have never loved it. Consequently Jesus uttered on the cross those words which some have thought the noblest which fell from his lips, "Father, forgive them, for they know not what they do." That this prayer was spoken concerning his persecutors, some of whom were not in any way associated with his own nation or his faith, effectually disposes of the argument advanced by Seeley that Jesus urged his followers to discriminate between persons in the exercise of forgiveness. Of course, the light must come to those who sat in darkness before the act of forgiveness is complete. Leniency must also be shown towards those who are weak; who have tried to make amends and failed, who have striven and fallen. A certain lender had two debtors; the one owed a hundred pence, and the other fifty. When they had not wherewith to pay, he forgave them both.

Jesus taught men to err on the side of generosity in forgiveness. He warned his followers against any fine calculations of the number of times they were to forgive. The command to forgive until seventy-times seven is often regarded as excessive. But in our most intimate circles we forgive to the point of overlooking and neglecting many little offences, which in some families are magnified into grounds for division. When we think of his command to forgive liberally, we must bear in mind his statement

that impenitence places a man outside the pale of forgiveness.

We have in the Gospel all the material we require for building up an adequate doctrine of forgiveness. Why, then, has so little thought been given to the subject. Dr. Cobb has surely set before us the chief reason in one sentence in his article in the Encyclopaedia of Ethics and Religion. (Vol. 6, 78). He writes, " Theologians have been more concerned with sin than with sins, with discovering and establishing, on both spiritual and temporal grounds, a theory of the process by which God and mankind may come to be at one, rather than with showing how the individual may find grace with God." Their effort has been to find the means by which human nature, which has been regarded as essentially sinful, may be made acceptable to God, rather than to discover the way a man must take to remove the effects of that alienation from God which is the result of his actual sins and resume communion and comradeship with God as a son with a father.

The discovery of a doctrine of forgiveness, which will guide men and nations, has yet to be made, and all that our generation may be capable of doing is to emphasise the absence of it and the need of it.

In any study of the subject, certain distinctions must be kept clearly in view. The weakness in the theology of the past has been the result of regarding forgiveness of sins as the removal of the consequences of sin. Jesus and his apostles sought to deliver men from actual sins. This becomes clear if the texts usually quoted in favour of theories of propitiation are read without bias. " Ye were redeemed," writes Peter, " not with corruptible things, with silver and gold, *from your vain manner of life*, handed down from your fathers, but with precious blood, as of a lamb without blemish and without spot, even the blood of Christ." Again, we read, " He bore *our sins* in his body upon the tree that we having died unto sin might live unto righteousness. The purpose of the sufferings of Christ was therefore to bring men to *a new manner* of life or *righteousness*. When sin is written in the New Testament sin is meant and not penalty for sin. The prodigal abandoned his sin: his reconciliation with the father is complete, but the penalty is not removed. The son has wasted his patrimony and the father says to the elder brother, "All that I have is thine ! "

In the second place, we must pay close attention to our conception of justice. Generally in theories of the atonement justice is nothing more than the brutal old law of an eye for an eye and a tooth for a tooth—the *lex talionis*. The image of Justice with the scales has tended to emphasise this conception. Justice is supposed to be done when the indicator of the balance does not deflect a hair's-breadth to the right or to the left. Is that justice ? The famous saying of Confucius in reply to Laotsze, " Recompense kindness by kindness and injury by justice," suggests that it is. Jesus abrogated that law in the Sermon on the Mount. Is family life unjust, because one member generously overlooks the offences of another through parental, filial or brotherly love ? Is the man who forgives another some debt he cannot pay an accomplice in an act of robbery ? When we examine the doctrines which have usurped the rightful place of that of the forgiveness of sins, we discover their root weakness to be in the faultiness of the ethical estimates of the ages in which they originated. While we avoid a doctrine of the Fatherhood of God which makes divine forgiveness an expression of easygoing indifference to wrong or a culpable acquiescence in evil, we can surely perceive that his forgiveness is in accord with the strictest demands of justice. He would be unjust, if he did not forgive the man who turneth away from his wickedness and doeth that which is lawful and right, just as we are unjust if we spurn the contrite and broken in heart, who ask our forgive-

ness and strive to make reparation for the wrong done to us. As Dr. Claude Montefiore has written, "The justice of God *is* his forgiveness: his forgiveness in his justice. His righteousness is his love: his love is his righteousness. There is no conceivability of conflict between them." "We may apply to humanity," says John Morley in his Compromise, "the idea which, as Hebrew students tell us, is imputed in the Talmud to the Supreme Being. *God prays*, the Talmud says; and his prayer is this,—'Be it my will that my mercy overpower my justice.' And so with men, with or without their will, their mercifulness overpowers their logic. And not their mercifulness only, but all their good impulses overpower their logic. . . . We do not always work out every vicious principle to its remotest inference" (p. 72). A vicious principle is worked out to an unrighteous result, whenever the mythical conception of justice with the scales is adopted as the ideal. Truth is sacrificed to a symbol. For the balance can never be struck, and the tendency is always to pass beyond the bounds of equity, and in the name of justice to execute a wicked revenge. Through a pernicious habit of thought we have grown accustomed to make a very definite contrast between justice and mercy, but as a matter of fact the truly merciful act is just not only according to the spirit but according to the letter. Forgiveness of those who are repentant and willing to make amends involves no compromise of principles whatever, but is in accord with the principle of strictest justice. Indulgence may, especially when exercised for the purpose of avoiding trouble, but mercy never did and never can violate any moral or religious principle. Mercy is just and righteous and true altogether. That is the fact the world has to learn and learning it, it will cast aside many a mistaken platitude. The psalmist showed his insight when he wrote:

> Mercy and truth are met together:
> Righteousness and peace have kissed each other.

Thirdly. We must take into our calculation the effect of an act of forgiveness upon the man who is forgiven. If he is truly penitent, and he is not to be forgiven until he is, he will desire to bring forth fruits worthy of repentance. But we assume he will do nothing, that the word of forgiveness having been spoken, the matter will have an end. Generally, however, the result of a forgiving act is to reveal to him the heinousness of his sin, and to awaken his desire to make amends. When the sin is realised, as Peter realised his sin of denial at the look of the Master, the process of reform is furthered.

The forgiveness of God is shown to us out of His infinite love. We all need that forgiveness. The best of us cannot plead merit, but finally must cast ourselves upon the divine mercy. When we have done all the things that are commanded us, we must still say, We are unprofitable servants: we have done that which it was our duty to do.

Though the act of forgiveness is thus the result of the outflow of Divine love, it has a purpose of love as well. It operates for our redemption. God forgives us that we may do better, that he may win us for himself, that we may no longer be alienated from him, but may be reconciled to him. That message is written clear in the New Testament. God seeks us with his love. God forgives us for our good. That is surely a just as well as a loving thing. When we wake up to the knowledge of his mercy, we are truly sorry for our wrongdoing and we try to live more in accordance with his will. Forgiveness is part of God's method of redemption. It is the way of reconciliation he offers to us. The man who has experienced this cries out in his yearning after God, in his effort to attain a love which seems beyond him:

> Oh, the regret, the struggle and the failing!
> Oh the days desolate and the useless years!
> Vows in the night, so fierce and unavailing!
> Stings of my shame and passion of my tears.

It is not relief and easement and gladness only which the sense of

being forgiven brings, but sorrow and shame and effort.

Fourthly. Forgiveness is God's way of reconciliation. Is it not man's also? Is not the world in a state of uncertainty and insecurity, because this law of God and men has been denied. The astute statesman is often aware of the divine way. Bismarck said that Germany made lenient terms with Austria after the Battle of Savona in 1866, because she needed the friendship of Austria. If Germany had shown after the Battle of Sedan or if France had shown after the Great War a similar spirit of reconciliation should we not be living in a different world to-day? Mercy is God's way: mercy is just: and therefore any other way is fraught with disaster. Forgiveness reconciles, because it begets shame in the man or nation forgiven, and "shame is the soil of all Virtue, of good manners and good morals."

5. An important aspect of forgiveness has been elucidated by Dr. Douglas White in his volume on "Forgiveness and Suffering." He has shown the artificiality and failure of the many theories of atonement and satisfaction which have denied the possibility of free forgiveness by God, and he has maintained that God suffers through the waywardness and sinfulness of his children. As a psychological study of forgiveness and a thesis on the reality of the suffering of God through the sins of men which strike at the heart of a loving Father every time, this little volume is significant. But he also makes a contribution to the moral side of this subject, when he stressed the fact that "without suffering there can be no forgiveness." So far as the wrongdoer is concerned, "forgiveness may come without punishment or punishment without forgiveness" (p. 59), but there must be pain and suffering on the part of him who forgives. To forgive any great wrong involves an effort which is often painful in the extreme. It puts a strain on one's whole nature and seems like a violation of every principle of justice and truth. But when reconciliation is sought or when desire to bring the wrongdoer to better ways is present, the effort, great as it is, is made. As Dr. White says, "When love comes in contact with moral evil, when the loving God comes into touch with the sinner, then if that love is to result in reconciliation and forgiveness, suffering must be the means and the method. It is certainly true in men: Jesus came to tell us it is true in God" (p. 53). So long as men demand satisfaction, they will continue to maintain that only the wrongdoers ought to bear the penalty. But as soon as they seek reconciliation, and desire to share a common life and live peaceably together in the world, they are prepared to accept the suffering which always falls to the lot of the righteous who would redeem the world. Continuance of division is often due to unwillingness to endure the responsibility and suffering which are always the sacrifices demanded from those who forgive.

In any estimate of forgiveness we have to decide how far pain is inflicted for the purpose of correction. Punishment may be retributive, and in that case may or may not be connected with forgiveness. Or it may be redemptive or remedial. In this case it is doubtful whether we ought to speak of it as punishment, for as Dr Dale said: "Suffering inflicted upon a man to make him better in the future is not punishment but discipline." A father, for instance, may fully and freely forgive his son some misdemeanour and yet take steps which will prevent him from repeating the offence. Remember Dr. Mobeley ("Atonement and Personality," p. 10) says "that sin means a condition of a personality, and that punishment is a treatment of a personality; and at once it is felt that equivalence between sin and punishment, even if it were possible to establish any measure of equivalence, would have no meaning and lead to no conclusion at all." To bring the person into a condition in which the inclination to do wrong no longer exists is the chief aim of all redemptive action and this can sometimes be most effectu-

ally accomplished by an act of forgiveness. Other factors have to be considered, for the persons of innocent people may have been violated and society wronged ; and how these shall be righted is one of the problems of criminal law. An attitude of impenitence is sometimes taken by the criminal which indicates that he is not ready for what we may term the " discipline of forgiveness," and restraint is necessary until he is brought to a better state of mind and heart. But love conquers all things, and the effort during the past few years to make our penal system more redemptive has certainly had excellent results. For the most part, painful as the process is, both the wrongdoer and the sufferer gain materially as well as spiritually through the exercise of a forgiving spirit. The relation between a father and son may be nobler and the confidence between them stronger through the revelation of affection in an act of generous pardon. History seems to indicate at least that age-long feuds and the thousand wars of old may have an end through magnanimity and good-will.

In a fragment which has survived from the lost Gospel according to the Hebrews, it is recorded, "And it came to pass when the Lord was come up out of the water, the whole fount of the Holy Spirit descended and rested upon him, and said unto him : My son, in all the prophets was I waiting for thee, that thou should'st come and I might rest in thee." God waits for the birth and growth of his children, and waits that he may reveal more clearly to us his message of forgiveness, mercy and love. In ancient days prophets and psalmists cried unto God, " O Lord, how long." Now we are conscious from inward experience and the history of man, that God is seeking to find rest in humanity and is pleading with our unforgiving spirit, " O man, how long ? "

We would ask our Readers to support our Advertisers, and to mention this Magazine when obtaining articles.

George Fox.

A Quaker family in England went to live in a town, where there was not a Friends' Meeting House, and joined our congregation there. The head of the family made it quite clear to the minister that they were Quakers, and the minister welcomed them, assuring them that they had as much right to be there as anyone else. A perusal of " The Friend," which in celebration of the Tercentenary of George Fox, has evidently been widely distributed, indicates the very liberal foundation of the Society of Friends, and that George Fox, its founder, was a man ahead of his time, and has not been done justice to by his followers, who allowed their movement in the course of time to be permeated to some extent by Calvinistic ideas, to which George Fox was opposed.

Calvinism maintains that human nature is essentially corrupt, through the sin of a degenerate ancestor. George Fox took the opposite stand, and maintained that it was essentially good, that the inner light, the Divine presence was in every human being. His teaching is thus summarised :—

" (1) He believed that a divine light, the in-dwelling Christ, existed in every man, which gave a new illumination and interpretation to all the facts of life ;

" (2) He believed that no spiritual experience was effective or transforming which was not acquired at first hand, direct, experimental and personal—without dependence on external authority, book, creeds, priest or church ;

" (3) He believed, and lived and acted on the belief, in the practice of the Presence of God."

Dr. E. Russell in his article on " The Ministry of George Fox " writes :— " In his ministry he insisted likewise on the first-hand knowledge of spiritual realities on the part of all. Calvinism was disposed to accept statements of the Bible in lieu of experimental knowledge of their truth, but Fox shared Kipling's scorn of ' the God ye took

from a printed book.' In the Ulverston Church he gave the challenge: 'The Scriptures—what are they but the words of the prophets, of Christ and His apostles, uttered by men who enjoyed and possessed this Light which they received from the Lord? What have you to do with the words of the Scriptures, unless you come to the same Spirit which gave them forth? You open the Bible and say, 'Christ saith this,' and 'the apostles say that,' but what do you say yourselves? Art thou a child of the Light? Hast thou walked in the Light? What thou sayest concerning God does it come to thee inwardly from Him?"

There are few Liberal Christians who would dissent from a statement such as this. George Fox loved his Bible, none knew it better than he, yet he declined to accept it as of supreme authority; there was a higher authority than the Bible, and that was the Spirit, which was the possession of everyone. There was too much preaching, he said, far too many words; men needed to be famished for words. George Fox valued accuracy of speech and observation, and considered the use of words a matter of high responsibility. Hence he insisted on Yea being Yea, and Nay, Nay, and used the pronouns "Thou" and "Thy," (which in his day were only used by superiors to inferiors), to all alike. He valued sincerity, and declined to lift his hat, or take it off in church or court. Fanatical he may have been to a certain extent, all pioneers must be that, for the difference between a lunatic and a martyr is that the lunatic is possessed by a false idea, and the martyr is possessed by a right one. in either case the idea is an irresistible force. Yet, because of his habit of "waiting for the Spirit," engaging in a meditation before speaking, which sometimes kept his audience waiting for hours, his utterances as testified to, by William Penn and others, were fresh and powerful. His very glance upon people was sometimes more than they could bear, for they would beg him to take his eyes off them.

Not only was he a preacher, he was a great social reformer. Of the Universal Light, he said "I saw it shine through all." "Your poor and blind and lame cripples and women and children are crying up and down your streets and steeple-house doors, and alleys and corners, after you that call yourselves Christians, and yet they are Christians as well as you, and so members of the same body." This great love and compassion that he had for the poor, and suffering and oppressed, found its expression. "Anti-slavery, prison-reform, pacifism, feminism, education and the movements for political liberty and social equality have all been pioneered by men and women who have followed in their own day and in the light of the Inward Guide to which he pointed them, the way of life which George Fox lived and taught three hundred years ago."

This shoemaker with the leathern jacket he made for himself, that wouldn't wear out for a long time, travelling up and down, crossing seas, and teaching wherever he got the opportunity, frequently enduring imprisonment, founded the Society of Friends, which though it makes no special effort at propaganda, is a centre of good, wholesome influences, and numbers many whose names are celebrated for the great good that has been done. With few exceptions, its ministry is not specially set apart, wholly for that work, still there is no distinction drawn as between clergy and laity. Their ministers number 364, men 219, women 145 ("Yearly Meeting," 1900). One of their poets, "Whittier," has given us several hymns, and wherever among the Friends there is the endeavour to follow the liberal spirit of the great leader, they can only have our hearty good wishes, "for where the Spirit of the Lord is, there is liberty."

ULLIN.

"Outlines of the History of Presbyterianism in Ireland."

THE WESTMINSTER CONFESSION
Continued.

The Westminster Confession treats of "The fall of man, of sin, and of the punishment thereof," in the following and appalling language :—

"Our first parents being seduced by the subtilty and temptation of Satan, sinned in eating the forbidden fruit. This their sin God was pleased, according to his wise and holy counsel, to permit, having purposed to order it to his own glory.

"By this sin they fell from their original righteousness, and communion with God, and so became dead in sin, and wholly defiled in all the faculties and parts of soul and body.

"They being the root of all mankind the guilt of this sin was imputed, and the same death in sin and corrupted nature conveyed to all their posterity, descending from them by ordinary generation.

"From this original corruption, whereby we are utterly indisposed, disabled, and made opposite to all good, and wholly inclined to all evil, do proceed all actual transgressions.

"This corruption of nature, during this life, doth remain in those that are regenerated: and although it be through Christ pardoned and mortified, yet both itself, and all the motions thereof, are truly and properly sin.

"Every sin, both original and actual, being a transgression of the righteous law of God, and contrary thereunto, doth, in its own nature, bring guilt upon the sinner, whereby he is bound over to the wrath of God, and curse of the law, and so made subject to death, with all miseries spiritual, temporal, and eternal."

The same ideas are condensed, and if possible rendered more shocking, in the "Catechism" which every Minister of the Irish General Assembly is solemnly bound to put into the hands of his people, and in which, at their baptism, every parent in that Church pledges himself to instruct his children :

"The sinfulness of that estate whereinto man fell, consisteth in the guilt of Adam's first sin, the want of that righteousness wherein he was created, and the corruption of his nature, whereby he is utterly indisposed, disabled, and made opposite unto all that is spiritually good, and wholly inclined to all evil, and that continually ; which is commonly called Original Sin, and from which do proceed all actual transgressions."

"Original sin is conveyed from our first parents unto their posterity by natural generation, so as all that proceed from them in that way are conceived and born in sin."

"The fall brought upon mankind the loss of communion with God, his displeasure and curse ; so as we are by nature children of wrath, bond slaves to Satan, and justly liable to all punishments in this world, and that which is to come."

"The punishments of sin in this world are either inward, as blindness of mind, a reprobate sense, strong delusions, hardness of heart, horror of conscience, and vile affections ; or outward, as the curse of God upon the creatures for our sakes, and all other evils that befall us in our bodies, names, estates, relations, and employments ; together with death itself."

"The punishments of sin the world to come, are everlasting separation from the comfortable presence of God, and most grievous torments in soul and body, without intermission, in hell-fire for ever."

It would be inconsistent with my design in drawing up these "Outlines," to make any extended remarks upon the extraordinary statements contained in the preceding extracts. Indeed, they scarcely require commentary—standing out, as they do, in such prominent opposition to the justice and benevolence of God, to the plainest teachings of the Bible, and to the common sense of mankind. Were they promulgated for the first time, I feel convinced that they would be received

THE NEW NEWTOWNARDS CHURCH.
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with one universal shout of disapprobation ; but, as that which is familiar seldom creates surprise, millions of worthy men, who have been accustomed from childhood to hear and read the doctrines of Calvinism, receive them without the slightest consideration, and lend the weight of their characters and influence to the support of a system which, I sincerely believe, they would unhesitatingly reject, did they seriously reflect upon its principles and tendencies. No dogma of that system is more unworthy, whether we consider its relation to the dealings of God or the condition of man, than that which is called the doctrine of Original Sin, or in other words, the transfer of the guilt of Adam and Eve to all their descendants. The presentation of that doctrine, therefore, in some of its more striking aspects, may not be unprofitable, owing to its late revival and authoritative enforcement amongst the larger bodies of the Presbyterians of Ireland.

The "Confession" sets out by stating, that "our first parents were seduced by the subtlety and temptation of Satan, and sinned in eating the forbidden fruit." It may be so : but in that case, "they were more sinned against than sinning" ; for, according to the Scripture narrative, they had not, until after their disobedience, "any knowledge of good or evil." How, under these circumstances, they could commit sin, at all, since they knew no distinction between vice and virtue, is not easily comprehended ; especially as they came into existence in the full maturity of their bodily constitution and passions, but without any of the advantages derived from experience and mental training, to aid them in resisting temptation. Besides,

how could such ignorant and inexperienced creatures be expected to withstand "the subtlety of Satan"—that Prince of Demons, whom Orthodoxy has gifted with omnipresence, and exalted into such continued and successful rebellion against the Most High, that, in despite of all the riches of Divine Grace, and all the labours and love of the Redeemer, he is constantly carrying away the vast majority of the souls of men into everlasting perdition! Were an earthly parent to commit his infant child to the flames, even for one moment, because, at the instigation of some grown person, it had eaten of some forbidden sweet, temptingly placed in its way by the parent himself, should we not justly execrate him as a fiend in the form of a man? And, yet, Churches are not ashamed to ascribe such conduct to the "Father of Mercies"; and that not in a single case and for a single moment, but in countless millions of cases, and through out eternity! Neither is this all nor the worst: for, if Calvinism be true, God not only "permitted" but "ordained" the sin of our first parents, and "decreed" that Satan should tempt them in their ignorance and weakness, "having purposed to order it to his own glory!" Oh! what awful notions must the framers of this Creed have entertained with regard to the glory of the Most High! They speak, not in this place only, but in many other places, as if all His arrangements were made solely for the purpose of manifesting His own sovereignty and establishing His own dignity—forgetting that infinity cannot be exalted by any act or suffering of that which is finite; and that the true glory of a wise and benevolent Being can only be evidenced by the extension of good and happiness.

Had our first parents, therefore, been alone subjected to such awful penalties for so trifling an offence—and that offence inevitably committed through "the subtlety of Satan" and by "the decree of God"—the imputation thereby cast upon Divine Justice and Mercy would be distressing to every pious and enlightened mind. But Calvinism does not stop here: it ascends in a still bolder flight, and declares that "the guilt of this sin and a corrupted nature are conveyed to all their posterity—whereby we are utterly indisposed, disabled, and made opposite to all good, and wholly inclined to all evil—bound over to the wrath of God and curse of the law, and so made subject to death, with all miseries, spiritual, temporal, and eternal—doomed to everlasting separation from the comfortable presence of God, and most grievous torments in soul and body, without intermission, in hell-fire, for ever!" The awful picture of present depravity and endless misery here presented to our view, is not drawn from the condition of fiends, or demons, or murderers, or the hardened villains of society, whose enormous personal guilt might justly incur personal sufferings. No, not at all: the guilty here spoken of are merely sinners by proxy, and sufferers for offences committed by others, thousands of years before they themselves were born! The infant that has just drawn breath—that could not think an evil thought or do an evil deed—is, according to the Westminster Confession, "a transgressor of the righteous law of God, bound over to the wrath of God and curse of the law, with all miseries, spiritual, temporal, and eternal." There is an exception, indeed, in favour of "elect infants, dying in infancy, who are regenerated and saved by Christ, through the Spirit"; but, as to the number of such favoured infants, we have no information, or of the special grounds of their election to life, whilst "others, not elected, are to suffer most grievous torments, in hell-fire, for ever." If Calvinism be true, the proportion of "elect infants" may be the same as that of elect men; and, in that case, one in a thousand, perhaps may be saved, whilst nine hundred and ninety-nine go down to everlasting perdition, for the sin of our first parents committed 5,850 years ago, in the Garden of Eden, through "the subtlety and temptation of Satan!"

Now, I have neither exaggerated nor caricatured this Doctrine : I have not, as I might easily have done, quoted appalling statements from individual writers : I have simply given the very words of " the Accredited Standard " of the Irish General Assembly ; and although I well know that my extracts and comments will probably offend some worthy persons whom I sincerely esteem, let it be kept in mind, that the blame does not rest with me, but with the Church which has re-imposed, at the end of one hundred and fifty years, the Creed of a dark and bigoted age ; and with those who, although ashamed of such Creed, and privately repudiating its Doctrines, at the same time submit to its authority, and give it the sanction of their public support.

Church Chronicles.

(Newry Congregation)

The Congregation worshipping at this Church can, so far as its history is concerned, boast of a goodly heritage. Dating back to the middle of the 17th century, when Scottish settlers founded a Presbyterian Congregation at a place known as the Meeting House Rocks, situated about a mile out from the town on the Belfast Road, it has maintained through successive generations a prominent position in the religious life of the district, and numbered among its members some of the foremost men, who were closely identified with its commercial and professional life. Of the early history of the Congregation under the ministry of the Rev. George Lang, the first pastor, there is not a great amount of information available. Public worship was regularly held previous to the Revolution of 1688. Dissenting Protestants having been prohibited from holding meetings, and being otherwise persecuted, Mr. Lang, with eighty families of his congregation, taking their cattle and other effects, deemed it prudent to retire northwards to a place of security, where they remained until peace was restored. Mr. Lang, whose labours appear to have been very extensive, died on the 25th January, 1702.

After an interval of nearly 4½ years, the Rev. Robert Rainey was ordained as minister in June, 1706. His pastorate covered a period of 33 years, according to a note in the Congregational Register, but Dr. Strahan, in his instructive and interesting book on the " History and Relationship of the First Newry (Sandys Street) Presbyterian Congregation " states that he died on the 15th September, 1736, which, if correct, reduces the period to 30 years.

Mr. Rainey's ministry witnessed the removal of the congregation to a new Meeting House erected on a piece of ground granted to the congregation at a very nominal rental, in the High Street. This was in the year 1724, and it was from the pulpit of the Church that Rev. John Wesley preached on an occasion when passing through the town. Although the ravages of time have played havoc with the building and its historic pulpit, the property remains in the possession of the present Trustees of the Congregation, and the burying-ground attached is the resting-place of some of the notable men, both ministers and laymen, whose names are held in sacred remembrance.

Mr. Rainey was succeeded by the Rev. James Moody, of whom Dr. Strahan writes in his book previously referred to, " his installation was deferred, owing to a reference made by the Presbytery to the Synod in the year 1739. At the time objection had begun to be made to the law of the Church requiring subscription to the Westminster Standards as a guarantee of orthodoxy." Mr. Moody, though he had subscribed at his ordination at Maherally, refused to renew his subscription at his installation, and Presbytery asked for direction in the matter." A committee was appointed by Synod to confer with Mr. Moody, and eventually the matter was satisfactorily arranged.

He held the charge for a period of 40 years, his death taking place in

the year 1779. He was succeeded by his son, Rev. Boyle Moody, who was installed on August 11th, 1779, his ministry extending over a period of 19 years. He died in Ferbuary, 1799, after a lingering illness, at the comparatively early age of 45.

A note in the Congregational Register states that the old translation of the "Psalms of David" had been used in public worship until the time of the Rev. Boyle Moody's ministry. A new collection of "Psalms and Hymns" was then introduced, and afterwards, in the year 1811, a much larger collection was prepared and adopted.

The Rev. John Thom, a licentiate from Scotland, was next ordained to the charge on the 5th August, 1800. His ministry was cut short by death, in July, 1808, thus extending over a period of 8 years only. He left a widow and family, one son, born only in the previous January, being the Rev. John Hamilton Thom, a contemporary of Dr. James Martineau, and minister of the Renshaw Street Unitarian Church, Liverpool, where he ministered for 40 years. Next in succession came Rev. Andrew G. Malcom, D.D., who had been minister of the Dunmurry congregation for a short period. He was a kinsman of Revs. James and Boyle Moody and a great-great-grandson of the Rev. George Lang. He was installed on 14th March, 1809, and proved to be a gifted preacher and scholar. His literary work is to be found in local magazines of the period, and several hymns written by him are found in the Newry collection of Psalms and Hymns, which was adopted during the ministry of the Rev. Boyle Moody.

Dr. Malcom died on the 12th January, 1823, of typhus fever, and his remains are buried in the Old Meeting House Green, High Street, the spot being marked by a monument erected by the congregation as a tribute to his memory.

The Rev. John Mitchel was the next minister called to the charge of the congregation, he being installed on the 2nd September, 1823. Previously he had been pastor of the Dungiven congregation from 1804 to 1819. During the years between this pastorate and his settlement in Newry he was one of the ministers of the congregation of Londonderry. Mr. Mitchel married Miss Mary Haslett, of Derry, in the year 1811.

It was during Mr. Mitchel's ministry that the question of Non-subscription led to the Remonstrant separation from the Synod of Ulster.

Mr. Mitchel having, in a series of discourses delivered by him on the "Scripture Doctrine of the Divinity of the Lord Jesus Christ" displeased some of the members, several left the church and formed the first adherents of the congregation now worshipping in First Newry (Sandys St.) Presbyterian Church. The majority of the members, however, remained loyal to their minister; and in this connection it is interesting to quote from a letter written by Mr. Mitchel to Wm. Hunter, Esq., one of the arbitrators appointed to divide such funds as were the joint property of the two Synods.

Under date July 25th, 1832, he states: "Before the congregation was divided it consisted of 400 families: fifty of these have withdrawn." In a later return made to Synod in 1833 he gives the number of families as 300, and the number of individuals attached to the congregation as 1,250.

A dauntless advocate for freedom and Non-subscription, Mr. Mitchel was one of the leaders in the opposition to subscription. He was scholarly and eloquent, and greatly esteemed by all sections of the community for his charitable and public activities. He died in the year 1840 at Dromalane, and his remains lie in the Old Meeting House Green in High Street in a vault alongside the grave of Dr. Malcom.

Rev. Henry Alexander is the next in succession, he having been called from the pastorate of the Presbyterian congregation, Nicholas Lane, Lancaster. He was ordained as minister on the 29th September, 1840, and was the son of the Rev. Thomas Alexander, of Cairncastle, Co. Antrim. A scholarly

and eloquent pastor, he entered into many of the philanthropic activities of the town's life. He was held in the very highest esteem by members of every Church and his was a very successful pastorate. He served on the Committee of the Hospital, and of several Poor Relief Associations then existing. He was a Trustee of Windsor Hill Schools, and the Secretary of the Savings Bank for many years. He was, according to report, one of the leading speakers at the opening of the Newry Model School. But his relations with the members of the congregation were of the most devoted character, and there are several people who remember him in the later years of his ministry with esteem and reverence.

It was during Mr. Alexander's ministry that the congregation erected and removed to the present Church in Needham Place. It was designed by Mr. Barre, architect, and was completed in the year 1853, the opening services being conducted by the Rev. Dr. Henry Montgomery and Rev. John Scott Porter. The sum of £2,245 was collected for the building, and the cost of the Church itself amounted to £1,760. Attached to the circular announcing the opening services are the following names—William Glenny, Hill Irvine, Thos. A. Kidd, Robert Greer, P. Connor, A. D. James Glenny, Fred W. Kidd, S. L. Frazer, Thomas Irvine, Wm. Hy. Cordner, Robert M'Cracken, James Savage, George Scott (Treasurer). All these were men of substance in the commercial and professional life of the community.

Mr. Alexander's ministry extended to the 1st August, 1865, when he resigned. Shortly before his death on 11th April, 1868, he addressed an affectionate letter of farewell to his flock, copies of which are still preserved by those who had enjoyed his friendship. In the year 1867 a handsome stained-glass window was erected in memory of Robert Greer, Esq., by the

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family. Mr. Greer was in business as a publisher in Margaret Square in the premises now occupied by Messrs. J. Warnock & Co.

The Rev. John Armstrong Crozier, B.A., who came from the charge of the Remonstrant congregation of Ballymena, was called as assistant and successor to Mr. Alexander. Mr. Crozier during his occupancy of the Manse, twice enlarged it at his own cost, and planted several ornamental trees in the grounds. Both Mr. and Mrs. Crozier, the latter a daughter of Dr. Henry Montgomery, than whom the Remonstrants had no better or more able champion, were foremost in all good works for the benefit of the townspeople, and were given to hospitality. During his ministry the Schoolroom was enlarged in the year 1874, the cost being defrayed by subscription, and in the year 1880 a caretaker's house was erected at the rear of the Church, the cost being met by an Anonymous Friend. Mr. Crozier resigned the pastorate on the 1st August, 1890, and died at his residence, Stramore House, Gilford, on 7th August, 1898. The Rev. Samuel Cordner Pinkerton, B.A., was called to become Assistant and Successor to Mr. Crozier and was installed on the 5th August, 1891. Mr. Pinkerton had previously been minister of the Unitarian Church at Godalming, in Surrey, from 1886 to 1890. Mis ministry was a fruitful and happy one for both pastor and people. On the 31st January, 1894, he married Miss Emilie Cordner, and many Newry people remember with pleasure this lady's literary work in the publication of the "Open Window," which had a great circulation both at home and abroad during the years of its publication.

Unfortunately, both Mr. and Mrs. Pinkerton fell into bad health and passed away within a short period of each other, Mrs. Pinkerton in August, 1902, and Mr. Pinkerton in March, 1903, leaving a young family.

The Rev. G. V. Crook became minister of the congregation in July, 1903, having held the pastorate of the Unitarian Congregation at Taunton in Somerset. During Mr. Crook's ministry a successful bazaar was held and a debt on the Church extinguished. Mr. Crook resigned the charge at the end of July, 1907, and after an interval of a little over two years, a unanimous call was given to the present minister, who entered upon his duties on September 12th, 1909, and was ordained by the Armagh Presbytery on the 5th of October following.

Such is the record of the Ministers serving the congregation, and no Church has had more loyal supporters among its members than it. In the succession of Elders we find the names of many who have proved themselves towers of strength in the progress of years. The records available give but a small opportunity of naming all, or even many, but there are some who stand out as stalwarts, and of these we may mention Isaac William Glenny, Esq., who was Clerk of Session at the time of the division. Of him, it is said in the "Open Window" he was "Newry to the core." He was considered the handsomest man of his day, if popular tradition be true, and was familiarly known as "Purty Isaac Glenny." Mr. William Glenny, of Bridge Street, was his son.

To Newry people it is unnecessary to speak of Mr. John Mitchel's connection with this Congregation. Although not intimately identified with the affairs of the Church during the years of his strenuous energies in the realm of politics, he was, as were his sisters, one of whom married Mr. Hill Irvine, of Dromalane House, and another Mr. John Martin, the well-known Repealer, and his brother, Mr. Wm. Haslett Mitchel, for many years connected with the Newry Navigation Company, always interested in the Congregation of which their father was so long the minister.

The Irvine family also were staunch friends and supporters of the Church, and the names of Hill Irvine, Thos. Irvine, John W. Irvine are familiar to many of the older people of the town. Mr. James W. Irvine, son of Mr. Hill

Irvine, went to Australia soon after his father's death, and is now the Chief Justice of Victoria, which high office he has held for many years.

Mr. Henry Quinn, whose gift to the people of his native town in the Quinn Charity, has been of immense benefit to those who are its recipients, was also a member during the Rev. John Mitchel's ministry.

Then the Greer family were loyal members of the Church, and among other adherents we find the names of Cordner, Thompson, Kidd, M'Cracken, M'Alpine, M'Knight, George Scott, the Rev. Thos. H. M. Scott, who succeeded the Rev. Dr. Henry Montgomery as pastor of the Dunmurry Congregation. Albert Scott and Walter Scott, M'Cullough, James Fegan, J.P., who was a member and for a time Chairman of the Town Commissioners, Dr. Patrick Connor, M.D., George Hill, Derramore, James Colvin, Jas. S. Warnock, John Thompson, John M'Combe, Andrew Henning, Robert Rowland, Baird, Cowan, Crothers, Wharton, Rainey, Cunningham, Dr. Samuel Mills, M.D., Joseph Megaw, William Lockhart, and a host of others.

In the work of the Sunday School the names of Warnock, Scott, Irvine, Annett, Hill and Colvin are closely identified, and scholars of the period when these staunch and faithful teachers devoted their service to the young people, were privileged indeed. Mr. James Warnock was for many years the Superintendent of the Sunday School, and many who were taught by him have reason to remember the devoted care and attention he gave to the lessons he prepared for them. The same may be said of others, and even of those who serve now. It is pleasing to record that the Warnock family still retain the warmest interest in the work which was especially important to their father, Mr. C. Warnock, being the Superintendent of the School at this time.—

G.J,S.

Gather us in.

Gather us in, Thou Love that fillest all,
Gather our rival faiths within Thy fold;
Rend each man's temple's veil, and bid it fall
That we may know that Thou hast been of old.

Gather us in; we worship only Thee;
In varied names we stretch a common hand;
In diverse forms a common soul we see;
In many ships we seek one spirit-land.

Thine is the mystic life great India craves,
Thine is the Parsi's purifying beam,
Thine is the Buddhist's rest from tossing waves,
Thine is the empire of vast China's dream.

Thine is the Roman's strength without his pride,
Thine is the Greek's glad world without its slaves,
Thine is Judea's law with love beside,
Truth that enlightens, charity that saves.

Each sees one colour of Thy rainbow light,
Each looks upon one tint and calls it heaven.
Thou art the fulness of our partial sight:
We are not perfect till we find the seven.

Some seek a Father in the heavens above;
Some seek a human image to adore;
Some crave a spirit vast as life and love:
Within Thy mansions we have all and more.

O glorious Loving God, embracing all,
By many Paths do men approach Thy Throne;
All Paths are Thine; Thou hearest every call;
Each earnest seeker has Thee for his own.

REV. G. MATHESON.

Reports.

Larne and Kilwaughter.—The annual Sunday School Fete of this Congregation took place on Tuesday, 1st July. The place selected was Magheramorne, as it has been on the last four occasions. The Larne Sunday School proceeded to their destination by train, while the party from Kilwaughter were taken by char-a-banc. The weather was very uncertain, but good fortune attended the choice of date, as it happened to be one of the few good days interspersed among others of a character quite unsuited to such an outing. Shortly after arrival the usual tea, etc., was served to the satisfaction of all concerned. After which, games, races and other forms of amusement were indulged in until it was time to think of returning. Tea was again served to the juveniles and then all proceeded to Magheramorne railway station to be conveyed back to Larne after having spent a most enjoyable and pleasant time.

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Cairncastle.—On July 1st many of the adult members of the Old Meeting House had a great treat. A party of 50, including a few friends, left Ballygally at 10 o'clock in two large chars-a-banc, bound for Garron Tower, the Glens of Antrim, and Ballymena. The morning was perfect, with bright sunshine and blue sea, and all enjoyed the beautiful drive to Garron Tower, where, after spending about an hour and a half exploring the Head, the Rosary, and the Dogs' grave, etc., all assembled in the Hotel for a very acceptable lunch. After the party had been photographed by one of the young men, it descended to the Coast Road again and went on by chars-a-banc to the lovely Vale of Glenariff, where most of the company left the cars and scrambled up and down the pretty Glen paths, and admired the numerous waterfalls, while some remained in the cars and drove to the head of the Glen. The drive by Parkmore, through the peats to Ballymena, was a bracing change after the sheltered glen with its ferns and growth. At Ballymena all greatly enjoyed an excellent tea with home-baked bread and cakes. Afterwards some of the party did shopping and others visited their friends, etc., and then the younger members danced in the large tea-room to the music of a piano, and a mandoline kindly brought and played by Mr. Dan Hoey. Although rain fell on the homeward journey all agreed that they had had a perfectly delightful time and look forward to another such outing next year. On Tuesday, August 5th, the annual Sunday School Treat was held in a field kindly lent by Mr. Saml. M'Cormick. Again the weather was favourable and after a dull morning it turned out a beautiful afternoon and evening. All enjoyed the games, stilts, sports, tea, lemonade, etc., and in the evening a great many people had gathered in the field and later adjourned to the schoolroom for a dance, which was kept up till early the next morning.

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Belfast : First Church.—During August while the Minister was away on holidays, the pulpit was taken by local ministers, including the Moderator and the Rev. Herbert Barnes. Considering the absence of members on holidays and the very bad weather, the attendances were fairly good. But with the coming of September it is expected that a marked improvement will be maintained. On the Sunday evenings the Minister is to give Special Sermons on "Religion and Reality" dealing with such subjects as the World, Man, God, Heaven and Hell. Many visitors attend the evening services and it is believed that their number will be increased during September. There are many indications that thoughtful believers no longer find themselves able to accept traditional theology. They demand a reasonable religion which knows of no conflict between theology and science. Wherever the claims of both are met there is an appeal made to which an increasing number of the thoughtful will respond.

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